

Fafnir

STEVIE SMITH

In the quiet waters
Of the forest pool
Fafnir the dragon
His tongue will cool

His tongue will cool
And his muzzle dip
Until the soft waters lave¹
His muzzle-tip

Happy the dragon
In the days expended
Before the time had come
for dragons
To be hounded

Delivered in their simplicity
To the Knights of the
Advancing Band
Who seeing the simple
dragon
Must kill him out of hand.

When thy body shall be torn
And thy lofty spirit
Broken into pieces
For a Knight's merit,

When thy life-blood shall
be spilt
And thy Being mild
In torment and dismay
To Death beguiled²

Fafnir, I shall say then,
Thou art better dead
For the Knights have
burnt thy grass
And thou couldst not
have fed.

The time has not come yet
But must come soon
Meanwhile happy Fafnir
Take thy rest in
the afternoon.

Take thy rest
Fafnir while thou mayest
In the long grass
Where thou liest

Happy knowing not
In thy simplicity
That the Knights have come
To do away with thee.

SIEGFRIED
CARCASS

Arth

1 lave: wash; bathe

2 beguiled: tricked; deceived